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Allegiances

ThunderClan

Leader:

Volestar - tan tomcat with blue eyes

Deputy:

Patchtail - calico tomcat with yellow eyes

Apprentice, Sandpaw

Medicine Cat:

Flamestep - ginger tomcat with blue eyes

Warriors:

Falconheart - ginger tomcat with brown eyes

Apprentices, Ashpaw , Clawpaw

Mosspuddle - reddish brown tabby she-cat with green eyes

Runningheart - light brown tabby tomcat with yellow eyes

Goldenlight - golden she-cat with blue eyes

Apprentice: Longpaw

Feathermist - gray tabby she-cat with blue eyes

Apprentices:

Sandpaw - black she-cat with yellow eyes

Longpaw - golden tabby tomcat with brown eyes

Ashpaw - calico tomcat with amber eyes

Clawpaw - black she-cat with copper eyes

Queens:

Cinderleg - dark gray she-cat with blue eyes

Elders:

Mallowstorm - white tomcat with light brown patches, formerly the leader

Kits:

Streamkit - gray tabby tomcat with blue eyes

Rosekit - light brown tabby she-cat with brown eyes

ShadowClan

Leader:

Nightstar - black tomcat with a white underbelly and copper eyes

Deputy:

Wetfoot - white tomcat with black ears and yellow eyes

Medicine Cat:

Specklefur - brown speckled tabby she-cat with a white underbelly and yellow eyes

Apprentice, Toadpaw

Warriors:

Spiderclaw - light gray tabby tomcat with a white underbelly and yellow eyes

Apprentice, Adderpaw

Snakewing - light ginger she-cat with blue eyes

Russetstorm - reddish-brown tabby tomcat with yellow eyes

Duskfall - dark gray she-cat with yellow eyes

Weaselfoot - cream tomcat with blue eyes

Apprentice, Petalpaw

Dawnpetal - black she-cat with yellow eyes

Apprentices:

Petalpaw - white she-cat with yellow eyes

Adderpaw - dark gray, almost black tomcat with yellow eyes

Queens:

Leopardpoppy - white she-cat with yellow eyes

Elders:

Sorrelstep - gray tabby she-cat with blue eyes

Kits: *None.*

RiverClan

Leader:

Mistlestar - white she-cat with blue eyes

Deputy:

Echofall - dark gray tomcat with green eyes

Medicine Cat:

Minnowflower - tortoiseshell she-cat with yellow eyes

Apprentice, Reedpaw

Warriors:

Fishleap - light gray tabby she-cat with blue eyes

Bumbletooth - brown tabby tomcat with yellow eyes

Apprentice, Silentpaw

Ripplestorm - black tomcat with yellow eyes

Apprentice, Farpaw

Blackwing - black tomcat with yellow eyes

Webfrost - white tomcat with yellow eyes

Apprentices:

Silentpaw - golden she-cat with yellow eyes

Farpaw - black and tan she-cat with yellow eyes

Queens:

Creekstorm - golden she-cat with yellow eyes

Elders: *None.*

Kits: *None.*

WindClan

Leader:

Swallowstar - white she-cat with blue eyes

Deputy:

Runningbird - reddish-brown she-cat with yellow eyes

Apprentice, Crouchpaw

Medicine Cat:

Sunbird - dark brown tomcat with brown eyes

Apprentice, Rabbitpaw

Warriors:

Meadowsong - light ginger she-cat with blue eyes

Beeflower - light ginger tabby she-cat with brown eyes

Apprentice, Adderpaw

Smokestep - dark gray tomcat with yellow eyes

Apprentice, Volepaw

Dustblaze - orange tabby tom

Graybird - gray tomcat with yellow eyes

Hallowpool - light brown sokoke tabby she-cat with yellow eyes

Antfire - golden tomcat with yellow eyes

Ivysong - dark gray she-cat with yellow eyes

Jumpingpelt - gray tomcat with yellow eyes

Apprentices:

Crouchpaw - solid gray she-cat with yellow eyes

Rabbitpaw - brown she-cat with amber eyes

Adderpaw - golden tabby she-cat with amber eyes

Volepaw - solid pale ginger she-cat with brown eyes

Queens: *None.*

Elders:

Tallfrost - black she-cat with green eyes, formerly the medicine cat

Kits: None.

Prologue

"No!" a she-cat hissed. She arched her back and bared her teeth at the tom who sat before her.
"Oh pipe down," the tom said, rolling his eyes at his mate.

The warrior ignored him. "Farleap, you weren't there! You don't know what he's done to the Clan, what he's done to me. I am your kin, listen to me!"

The other she-cat shook her head. "It's the truth! He's my father," Farleap defended.
The first cat groaned. "You're acting as soft as a kittypet! I don't know how I could have ever believed in you!"

The black tom chuckled. "Don't be so upset, darling. You've lost, just like your father Smokestar lost before you. It runs in your kin's blood." He turned to his deputy. "We have to move quickly to reach the camp before-"

"NO!" was the last thing he heard before he felt claws tearing through his throat...

Advice

"Sharpleaf," a voice called into the Medicine Den. The calico she-cat turned her head to find a tan tabby with blue eyes standing outside her den.
"Falconheart," she meowed. "What can I do for you?"
"Volestar requested you. He's waiting for you in his den," the warrior reported.

Sharpleaf looked back at her herbs for a moment, then got up and made her way across the clearing of the camp.
She passed the nursery where two kits were playing. "Okay, I'll be Nightstar and you'll be Patchtail, and we'll fight!" one kit said to the other.
"No fair! You were Nightstar last time."

Sharpleaf chuckled at the two. "Streamkit, Rosekit, what are you doing?"
"Oh, hi Sharpleaf! Me and Rosekit were playing."
The second kit rolled her eyes. "Streamkit won't let me be Nightstar!"
The medicine cat twitched her tail. "Well, how about Rosekit can play as Nightstar, and Streamkit can play as Patchtail?"

The kits groaned, "fine," they said as one. Satisfied, Sharpleaf got up and continued to her leader's den. "Volestar?" the she-cat asked.
"Come in," a voice told her.

Inside the cool shady den, a tom had his back to her and she cleared her throat.
"Sir, you wanted to see me?"

The pale ginger leader lifted his head to look back at the medicine cat.
"Sharpleaf, your here. Yes, I did want to talk with you. Has StarClan sent you any signs?" Volestar's voice was quick and worried, like he had just seen a monster coming off the thunderpath.
She shook her head. "No... they haven't. Has something happened?"

"No, it's just..." the leader started to pace. "I'm worried that the other Clans will try to attack."
"Oh..."
Volestar looked at her. "I'm sorry. You may go now." Sharpleaf looked at him for a minute. She sighed then left the den.

...

Sharpleaf looked at the sun in the sky. It was sunhigh. Where was the patrol? She sighed then went over to the fresh-kill pile where she chose a mouse then laid down in her den.
Sharpleaf's apprentice Flamepaw entered the den and looked at his mentor.

"Hi Sharpleaf. What are we gonna learn today?"
The medicine cat shook her head and grinned. "Your ceremony will be soon, Flamepaw. You have learned all there is to know about being a medicine cat. But just for fun, let's test you. What do you use for a bellyache?"

"Watermint or Chervil," Flamepaw answered confidently. His eyes gleamed with excitement as his mentor nodded.
"Good. Now, what do you give a cat if it has trouble breathing?"
The ginger tom thought for a minute. "Deathberries?"

Hearing the word, Sharpleaf wailed.
"NO! Unless you got a death wish, under NO circumstances are you to EVER use Deathberries."
Her apprentice gulped. "I'm sorry, Sharpleaf." He turned his head away in disappointment. How could he be so mouse-brained? To his surprise, Sharpleaf put a paw on his head and he looked back at her.

"Flamepaw, let me tell you something. After you were kitted, StarClan showed me that you were next in line to be the medicine cat. I asked them why, and they said you had potential and a fascination with herbs. Why else would you agree to be my apprentice?"
Flamepaw thought about it then his eyes widened with amazement.
"You really think StarClan laid down this path for me?"
The medicine cat nodded, "I do. Now come here." The two touched

noses.

The New Medicine Cat

The following 2 days were full of warriors yowling at the medicine cat for even agreeing to go with Nightstar. She told them all again and again that it was for the sake of the Clan, what she hadn't told them was that it was StarClan's intentions, knowing they would just protest even more and maybe lose faith in their warrior ancestors.

Flamepaw pressed against his mentor, begging her to stay.

"Sorry Flamepaw, but I must."

The apprentice's ears went down. "*Please*, stay!"

Sharpleaf sighed softly. "Again, I'm sorry." When she noticed Flamepaw's eyes starting to water, she quickly added, "hey I think it's time for your ceremony. Come on, we don't want to keep StarClan waiting, do we?"

Flamepaw felt a little better, then followed her out of the camp.

They quickly moved across SolarClan's territory until they came to Highstones. Flamepaw felt curiosity prick at him as he slowly followed Sharpleaf down into the cavern. He noticed that the other Medicine cats were here with their apprentices as well.

Minnowflower, the RiverClan medicine cat, was here with her apprentice, Reedpaw. The two nodded their heads as they stopped before them. Sunbird, the WindClan medicine cat, and his apprentice Rabbitpaw were standing a few pawsteps away. The next medicine cat was Specklefur and Toadpaw, from ShadowClan. The newest one was Swampleaf, the SolarClan medicine cat with her apprentice Petalpaw.

Sharpleaf gulped as she looked at Specklefur. The she-cat purred, then nodded her head, saying *hello.*

The ThunderClan medicine cat returned the greeting with a wave of her tail.

Flamepaw looked at the Moonstone as Sharpleaf sat down and began to speak.

"I, Sharpleaf, medicine cat of ThunderClan, call upon my warrior ancestors to look down on this apprentice. He has trained hard to understand the ways of a medicine cat, and with your help, he will serve his Clan for many moons. Flamepaw, do you promise to uphold the ways of a medicine cat, to stand apart from rivalry between Clan and Clan, and to protect all cats equally, even at the cost of your life?"

"I do," Flamepaw answered proudly, sticking out his chest with his tail held high.

"Then by the powers of StarClan, I give you your true name as a medicine cat. Flamepaw, from this moment you will be known as Flamestep. StarClan honors your quick thinking and your passion. Now, it is time for you to share tongues with StarClan as a full medicine cat."

The other medicine cats and apprentices waited their turn while Sharpleaf laid down by the Moonstone and waited for StarClan.

...

As night fell, Sharpleaf peeked her head out of the medicine den and looked around. It was almost time to meet Wetfoot at the border.

She looked around the camp again, trying to capture the last view of her birth Clan, then started padding towards the border of ShadowClan.

After a while, the former medicine cat came up to the thunderpath. The glowing eyes of a monster slowly illuminated the weird rock-solid stuff.

It suddenly zoomed past, causing Sharpleaf to crouch down. As it sped away, she could smell the stench it left behind.

She hacked and her eyes started watering. The calico she-cat looked both ways to make sure the coast was clear, then sprinted across.

The scent of the ShadowClan cat was stronger on the other side and Sharpleaf began to look around for him. After a few minutes, she decided to sit down and wait until *he* found her.

She turned around when she heard rustling and came nose to nose with Wetfoot!

She yowled and backed up. The white tom didn't flinch.

Guess he's used to it, she thought.

"Sorry Sharpleaf," the ShadowClan deputy said, even though his face remained in a scowl like he was waiting for orders.

After Sharpleaf got up, Wetfoot turned and started going deeper into ShadowClan's territory. His tail kinked over his body and Sharpleaf padded after him.

...

A dark-gray ShadowClan she-cat sat outside the entrance to the camp and Sharpleaf and Wetfoot came out from behind some bushes. The guard nodded her head as Wetfoot entered, followed by Sharpleaf.

"Duskfall," the deputy greeted. Sharpleaf waved her tail and Duskfall narrowed her eyes.

The ShadowClan camp was busy at night. It looked like every cat was bringing in prey, or training. Some of the cats turned to look at the former ThunderClan calico she-cat and Wetfoot went straight to his leader's den.

The leader's den was a giant rock with moss growing along the sides and the entrance was covered by brown dead vines.
"Sir, Sharpleaf is here," the yellow-eyed tom said.

A few seconds later, Nightstar slowly stepped out of his den and went to Sharpleaf while Wetfoot began to gather warriors for a

patrol.

"Sharpleaf, my dear, you're looking as beautiful as ever," the leader said as he grinned slyly. Sharpleaf rolled onto her back, and Nightstar took a step back.

At least she respects me, and that's all I need for now.

The Bite

A tortoiseshell she-cat padded through the weeds on the riverbank and the quarter moon started to sink below the horizon as the sun slowly started to take it's place. She ran through the grass until she met a dark gray tom and put the kit she was carrying on the ground.

"Echofall," she greeted the deputy, then looked at the kit sleeping on the ground. "Please, don't tell Mistlestar. For all she and the Clan knows, this she-kit has been left out in the forest all alone."

The green-eyed tom lashed his tail, his fur on end. "And what makes you think I won't tell?"

"Do it for me. Please brother." Echofall snarled looking at the kit, then back to the medicine cat. "This one time, Minnowflower."

The two slowly entered the camp and Minnowflower padded into the nursery where a golden queen laid with her two kits.

"Creekstorm, I found this kit all alone on our territory. I didn't scent any cat nearby either," the medicine cat lied. "Have you enough milk to care for another?"

At this, the queen looked at the she-kit by Minnowflower and felt sorry for it. "Give her to me. I'll take care of her, seeing that its mother didn't," Creekstorm said, looking at the kit after Minnowflower gently placed her next to her other kits in the nest.

Minnowflower nodded her thanks then padded back to her den.

Creekstorm sniffed the kit's black and orange fur and her eyes quickly widened. She smelled of ShadowClan!

(One night later...)

Thunder clapped in the sky, causing the camp to be illuminated by a bright white light. Falconheart and Volestar were in the leader's den, arguing about Sharpleaf. "We have to go after her and bring her back!" the warrior yowled. His eyes burned with fury.

"Sharpleaf made her decision!" Volestar hissed. Another clap of thunder rang out.

"Volestar, you may wanna come see this!" a warrior yowled. The leader and the warrior rushed to the entrance of the camp where they found Patchtail running to greet a calico she-cat. It was Sharpleaf!

The ShadowClan warrior retreated into a bush and came back with two kits in her jaws.

The she-kit was black with red eyes and orange speckled on her pelt. The tom was black and tannish orange with orange eyes.

Everyone gasped. "Who... who's the father?"

Sharpleaf started to sob as she looked at her old Clanmates. They all knew the answer.

...

Within the heart of the sandy hollow, two apprentices circled Falconheart, trying to practice their battle moves.

A calico tom dug his claws into the dirt and signaled his sister with his tail. The black she-cat slowly started toward the warrior while the calico tom dove for Falconheart's paws.

The tan warrior jumped over the apprentice as he tumbled a few fox lengths away. Falconheart then rear kicked the she-cat, sending her flying into a bush and landing with an "oof!"

"Interesting strategy, Ashpaw. But you're eyes portrayed where you were aiming. And Clawpaw, I could hear you all the way from SolarClan's territory!"

The half-Clan she-cat came out of the bushes with leaves in her jaws. She spit them out and joined her brother as he struggled to his paws and sat down.
"We're doing our best, Falconheart. Remember, we're ThunderClan cats. We've got this."

Falconheart shuffled his paws. *You're also half ShadowClan*, he thought.
He shook his head. "I think it's time we got back to camp," the warrior told the two before they all left the sandy hollow.

Yowls and hisses filled the air and the three cats immediately became on guard. "Oh no!" said Falconheart. "The camp is being attacked!" Ashpaw and Clawpaw glanced at each other then darted into camp with Falconheart behind them.

In the camp, a tom with blue eyes quickly ran at a ThunderClan warrior, who Ashpaw recognized was Weaselfoot. The young apprentice threw himself at the warrior and managed to bite his tail hard enough to make Weaselfoot yowl.

Clawpaw joined her brother as they fought Snakewing, a tan she-cat with turquoise eyes. The warrior hissed and raked her claws down Ashpaw's ear and his sister quickly jumped onto the she-cat's back, slicing into her flesh.

Duskfall was busy battling Mosspuddle, a brown she-cat, while Wetfoot slinked over to the nursery. Flamestep saw him and immediately ran to him, bit his scruff, and threw him back.

The ShadowClan deputy staggered to his paws and the medicine cat snarled.

"You fox-hearted cat! Leave those kits alone, or you'll have to go through me!"
Wetfoot hissed loudly and attacked Flamestep.

Nightstar saw his son and daughter and tackled Ashpaw. The leader bit down on Ashpaw's side, hearing a slight crack. He shook the apprentice for a second then threw him.

Ashpaw tumbled to the ground, kicking up dust, then rolled to a stop. He didn't move, pain coursing through his body.

Clawpaw, Falconheart, and the rest of the warriors eventually drove out the intruding Clan. After, everyone joined Ashpaw. The young apprentice wailed in pain as Flamestep rushed to him and gently put his paw onto Ashpaw's ribcage. He yowled once more.

"Nightstar dented his ribcage. I might be able to heal him, but we have to move fast." The medicine cat gently picked up the apprentice by his scruff and padded into the medicine den.

Clawpaw and Falconheart both looked up at the sky. *Please StarClan, help Ashpaw pull through.*

The Gathering

The full moon shone through the trees and stars twinkled above the ThunderClan cats as they padded through the forest. Falconheart looked behind him and saw Ashpaw leaning on Clawpaw for support because of his hurt side. The calico tom looked up at his sister and nodded, then continued to catch up with the Clan, with Falconheart behind them.

On the ridge, Clawpaw could see that the five Clans were already here. "Look, there's Daystar, SolarClan's leader," the she-cat said, pointing her paw at a huge white tom with brown eyes.

"He's huge!" Ashpaw gasped. Falconheart looked at the two apprentices then followed Volestar down to the other Clans. Not far away, a brown she-cat sat with her tail over her paws.

She looked over at a group of apprentices talking. A tom padded over and she saw that it was Echofall. "Good evening, Tallflight. How are you?"

"I'm well. Have you seen a black and orange she-cat around here? I need to find her."

"I thought I saw her somewhere by the Great Rock," the RiverClan deputy replied.
"Thank you," Tallflight said before she padded away.

Ashpaw and Clawpaw looked up at the Great Rock as Volestar began to speak.

"Cats of all Clans, welcome. To start this Gathering, I would like to welcome a new leader, Daystar, the leader of SolarClan."
The new leader nodded his head. "Hello ThunderClan, RiverClan, WindClan, and ShadowClan. I do not wish to invade your territory, as your prey is precious to you. But please note that if any cat steps

across into our territory, action will be taken," Daystar warned.

Mistlestar stepped up and scanned her Clan before speaking. "RiverClan has two new apprentices, Silentpaw and Farpaw. Now, the fish in the river are plentiful. We have no problems."
After, Swallowstar stepped up. "The twolegs have claimed more of our territory and have chased away most of the rabbits. I ask that ShadowClan allows my warriors to hunt in their territory."

At this, Nightstar yowled. "Share? Never! ShadowClan will never share with any Clan!" he spat.
Volestar hissed at the ShadowClan leader. "Nightstar, it is right to share what we have if one is desperate."
The black tom snarled. "Fine!" Then he took a breath and continued. "Now, my warriors have detected SolarClan cats in our territory. I'm not going to say names, but Daystar, have control of your Clan."

The white tom shot a glance at his deputy, Softbramble, who gulped nervously.

After Swallowstar reported no problems with WindClan, they started to head back to their own territories. All except for Tallflight, who searched for Farpaw. She spotted her and padded over.

"Farpaw, that's your name, right? May I talk to you for a minute?"

The apprentice looked around then nodded. "Sure..."
"

Have I seen you somewhere before?"

The tortoiseshell cat shook her head, "no I don't think so."

"No, I remember you from somewhere..." Tallflight suddenly gasped.
"

I know who you are now! You're the daughter of Falconheart!"

The Secret's Out

The sun shone in the sky and a mouse ran it's tiny paws down it's whiskers as it sat on the root of a tree. It gave a tiny squeak then darted into a hole when Falconheart, Clawpaw and Ashpaw padded by.

"So Falconheart," Clawpaw asked, "what are we going to see today?"

The warrior continued to walk. "Today I'm showing you two our borders," he answered.

"Hey Falconheart, Clawpaw, wait up!" Ashpaw said, limping after them. Falconheart and Clawpaw padded to the calico tom.

"You okay Ashpaw?" Falconheart asked. The apprentice nodded, his teeth bared and closed. "My side hurts a little. But I'll be okay."

The 3 cats continued toward ShadowClan's border where Clawpaw scented a patrol. "Smell that?"

Falconheart nodded. "ShadowClan patrol. Can you recognize the individual cats?"

After, Clawpaw and Ashpaw both sniffed and replied, "Scarfoot, Wetfoot, Snakewing and Petalpaw."

"Very good," Falconheart meowed. As if on cue, the ShadowClan patrol came out of a bush. Wetfoot narrowed his eyes and Petalpaw gulped.

"Wetfoot," Falconheart greeted. The ShadowClan deputy hissed back. "Stay on your side of the border, Falconheart."

"We were just leaving, weren't we?" the apprentices looked at their mentor then back at the ShadowClan cats.

"Hey, your Nightstar and Sharpleaf's kits right?" Scarfoot asked.

"What? No, we don't have parents," Ashpaw pointed out. Snakewing shook her head. "Your Nightstar and Sharpleaf's kits. Your mother gave you to ThunderClan so you wouldn't have to live in a cruel Clan."

Falconheart hissed at Snakewing then looked at his apprentices. Ashpaw and Clawpaw were shocked, like they were still trying to process what they just heard.

"Is it true...? Are we half-Clans?" Clawpaw asked. Falconheart wished he could reverse time, but he knew that he couldn't. He took a breath and replied, "yes."

Clawpaw gasped quietly as she started to back away. She then bolted. "Clawpaw!" Ashpaw and Falconheart called, to witch the black she-cat didn't look back at.

Falconheart looked at the ShadowClan border; Wetfoot and his patrol were gone.

...

Ashpaw looked at the sky. It was almost dusk and Clawpaw hasn't come back. On his way back to camp with Falconheart, he thought he saw her somewhere by sunningrocks. The apprentice sighed and padded over to the fresh-kill pile.

He laid down with a vole and after he finished his meal, he looked at Sandpaw who had joined him. "When are you getting your warrior name Sandpaw?"

The black she-cat looked up at him. "I don't know," she replied. "I overheard Patchtail and Volestar talking, so it shouldn't be too far away."

As if on cue, Volestar leapt onto the highrock. "Let all cats old enough to catch their own pray, join here beneath the highrock to hear what I have to say!"

Ashpaw chuckled and looked back at Sandpaw. "Looks like it's sooner than you think." The 2 apprentices padded over with some warriors, then sat beneath the highrock and waited for Volestar to

speak.

"Sandpaw, please step forward," the leader commanded and the black she-cat did so.

"I, Volestar, leader of ThunderClan, call upon my warrior ancestors to look down upon this apprentice. She has trained hard to under stand the ways of your noble code, and I commend her to you as a warrior in her turn. Sandpaw, do you promise to uphold the warrior code, to protect and defend this Clan, even at the cost of your life?"

"I do," Sandpaw answered.

Volestar continued. "Then by the powers of StarClan, I give you your warrior name. Sandpaw, from this moment on you will be known as Sandtooth. StarClan honors your bravery and your speed, and we welcome you as a full warrior of ThunderClan."

Volestar jumped down and rested his muzzle on Sandtooth's head. The new warrior licked Volestar's shoulder respectfully.

"Sandtooth! Sandtooth!" Ashpaw and the Clan chanted. Volestar nodded his head. "In the tradition of our ancestors, Sandtooth will sit in silence and guard the camp while we sleep."

Patchtail couldn't help but grin as he watched Sandtooth pad over to him and sit down.

Volestar got back up on the highrock. "There is one more ceremony that needs to be performed. Rosekit, Streamkit, please step forward."

The 2 kits did as they were told.

"Streamkit and Rosekit have reached their sixth moon, and it's time for them to become apprentices. Rosekit, from this day on, until you receive your warrior name, you will be called Rosepaw. StarClan, I ask you to guide this new apprentice. Set her paws on the path she must follow to become a warrior. Mosspuddle, you will be mentor to Rosepaw. You are agile and a good hunter. I know you will pass these qualities on to Rosepaw."

"Streamkit, from this day on, until you receive your warrior name, you will be called Streampaw. StarClan, I ask you to guide this new apprentice. Set his paws on the path he must follow to become a warrior. I shall mentor you myself."

Volestar jumped down and touched his nose to his apprentice, and Mosspuddle and Rosepaw did the same.

"Streampaw! Rosepaw!" the Clan chanted.

Ashpaw looked up at Falconheart who had sat by him. "When will I be a warrior?" the calico tom asked. Falconheart chuckled, "soon. Remember, you still have to take the journey to mothermouth, and beat me in combat."

Flamestep padded over to them as Volestar called the meeting to an end. "I still need some cat to come with me to mothermouth to speak with StarClan. I think Ashpaw and Clawpaw might be the two cats I need," the medicine cat gave a wink at the half-Clan.

"Sure! Me and Clawpaw will accompany you to mothermouth," Ashpaw's eyes gleamed, but his mood changed and he looked at the camp entrance.

Oh Clawpaw, where are you?

To RiverClan's Camp We Go

The half-moon glowed in the sky and the stars shone as clouds threatened to shield them from the world.

Sandtooth, Falconheart and the rest of the warriors slept peacefully in their nests while the apprentices slept intheir den. Ashpaw was pawed awake by some cat and he slowly opened his eyes to find Clawpaw standing over him with a crow in her jaws.

Ashpaw jumped out of his nest. "Clawpaw, your back!"

"Shh!" Clawpaw gave a muffled hiss, then dropped a crow at her brother's paws. "I went hunting, and caught a lot of prey. It's just... we always believed we were ThunderClan cats. And for that ShadowClan cat and Falconheart to say that we're half-Clans after all these moons... I just couldn't take it, so I ran off."

Ashpaw rested his muzzle on Clawpaw's head. "It's okay, Clawpaw. What's important is that your back." The two slowly pulled away from each other. "Oh, I almost forgot. Flamestep wants us to accompany him to mothermouth tomorrow."

"Okay," Clawpaw said.

. . .

The next day, Flamestep, Ashpaw and Clawpaw padded through the forest toward WindClan's territory.
"I'm starving, I haven't eaten since last night," Ashpaw groaned.
Flamestep looked back at him. "Did you eat the traveling herbs I

gave you? They were supposed to suppress your hunger."

"Well... They smelled bad, so I didn't eat them," Ashpaw answered.

The medicine cat rolled his eyes. "Come, we have to get through WindClan's territory."

The breeze of the moorland ruffled their fur and Flamestep caught the whiff of a patrol. "Runningbird's patrol. Come on, she won't know we're here if we keep moving."

They soon reached mothermouth and Flamestep sat down. "It's almost time to meet StarClan. You should hunt if your hungry and then get some rest."

"Come on, Ashpaw. You said you were hungry," Clawpaw padded away with the calico tom behind her.

. . .

Ashpaw and Clawpaw circled their mentor while Falconheart followed them with his eyes. He flicked his ear, trying to listen for one of the apprentices who might be sneaking up behind him.

Suddenly, Ashpaw tackled the ginger tom and he threw the apprentice off. Clawpaw slashed Falconheart while Ashpaw got to his paws. He lunged at his mentor and managed to pin him.

"Whoa Ashpaw, your doing wonderful. And you too, Clawpaw."

The two apprentices stuck out their chests and held their tails high. "I think your ready to become warriors."

Ashpaw and Clawpaw gasped in delight. They were finally going to be warriors!

Sandtooth sat by Falconheart and purred at Ashpaw, who felt his skin get hot under his pelt. Falconheart started to pad out of the sandy hollow and everyone followed.

When they got back to camp, Clawpaw caught the scent of blood and her eyes quickly widened. She raced over to Goldenlight. "What's happening?"

"Cinderleg is having her kits. Runningheart is with her now."

Clawpaw and Ashpaw let out a heavy sigh of relief.

Thank StarClan nothing is wrong.

...

In the ShadowClan camp, Nightstar sat in his den with his back turned to the entrance. Wetfoot stepped in and looked at his leader.

"Sir, we missed one. We missed a kit," he told his leader.
At this, Nightstar spun around. "What do you mean you missed one!?"

"Her name is Farleap. I saw Tallflight talking to her at the gathering. The way she reacted, she could be known as the daughter of Falconheart."

Nightstar thought for a minute then he gave a sly grin, and turned back to his deputy. "What did she look like?"

"An image of that good cat Sharpleaf, sir."

"Of Sharpleaf!? What about her... father?" Nightstar said the last word in a snarl.

Wetfoot shook his head. "No, she didn't resemble Falconheart. But sir, why does it matter?"

The leader didn't answer.

"Nightstar?" the deputy asked.

"And then Beetlestar took control of ShadowClan and enslaved us. He took away the basic freedoms, freedoms which we all deserve. The cats who follow him now only do it out of fear. They became mindless and

evil. One day, Beetlestar's rein will end, and we ShadowClan cats will be released from his evil hold," Dapplelight explained to the kits.

Nightkit, Smokekit and Rowankit listened to the elder with interest. Wetkit padded over and stood by Nightkit.

(15 moons later...)

Nightshade and Wetfoot snuck up on a magpie cleaning it's feathers. Wetfoot jumped at it and bit down on the bird. Nightshade padded over. "Very good, Wetfoot. Your becoming a fine hunter if I say so myself."

The two dark hearted toms started to drag their kill back to the camp.

"Smokestar isn't going to be happy that we took so long," Wetfoot said. Nightshade rolled his eyes at the mention of his brother's name and hissed, "forget about that tom! It's about time some other cat took his place. Some cat like me."

Wetfoot nodded. "You'd be a great leader. And I can be your deputy."

Nightshade cackled. "It's official. We attack Smokestar and Rowanleap at moon-high tomorrow. When they're dead, there will be no question as to who is the new leader..."

"Nightstar?" Wetfoot asked again, shaking the leader from his thoughts.

This time, the black tom turned around. "Get your sleep tonight, Wetfoot. Tomorrow, we go to RiverClan's camp."

The ShadowClan deputy purred. "I thought you'd say that. Witch warriors would you like me to bring for the battle?"

"No cats, we're going alone," Nightstar ordered.

Running Out Of Time

Ashpaw and Clawpaw stood in front of the highrock. This was the moment they had been waiting for.

"I, Volestar, leader of ThunderClan, call upon my warrior ancestors to look down upon these 2 apprentices. They have trained hard to under stand the ways of your noble code, and I commend them to you as warriors in their turn. Clawpaw, Ashpaw, do you promise to uphold the warrior code, and protect and defend this Clan, even at the cost of your life?"

"I do," Ashpaw answered.

"As do I," replied Clawpaw.

"Then by the powers of StarClan, I give you your warrior name. Ashpaw, from this moment on you will be known as Ashmoon. StarClan honors your bravery and your courage, and we welcome you as a full warrior of ThunderClan.

Clawpaw, from this moment on you will be known as Clawdawn. StarClan honors your hunting skills and your loyalty, and we welcome you as a full warrior of ThunderClan."

Volestar jumped down and rested his muzzle on the new warriors heads. Ashmoon and Clawdawn licked Volestar's shoulder respectfully.

"Ashmoon! Clawdawn!" the Clan chanted.

Sandtooth purred and padded over to Ashmoon then rubbed against him.

"In the tradition of our ancestors, Ashmoon and Clawdawn will sit in silence and guard the camp while we sleep. Meeting dismissed," Volestar jumped down from the highrock and padded into his den.

In RiverClan's camp, Nightstar, Wetfoot and Tallflight stood in the

leader's den.

"The 3 of you stand before Mistlestar, the leader of this Clan," Echofall reported.

Mistlestar looked at the ShadowClan leader and asked, "what is it that you need Nightstar?"

Nightstar slyly grinned. "Oh, not much. A kit would have arrived here about 18 moons ago. Black and tan fur, yellow eyes. I believe you call her... Farleap now?"

"Farleap..." Mistlestar took a moment to think. "Yes I do know her. She's an excellent fisher."

"Excellent. From now on you won't have to worry about her, because I'm taking her back to ShadowClan with me," Nightstar replied.

"What!? Farleap is young and strong! You can't raid my Clan of that-"

"Oh do shut up! I have been civilized up until this point. One word and Wetfoot puts an end to your deputy, and I take away one of your lives!"

Mistlestar looked over to where Echofall was struggling and growing too tired to deal with Wetfoot.

The ShadowClan leader continued. "Now, you give me Farleap without a fight, and we won't kill you where you stand. You have 10 seconds to decide." He slowly began counting down.

"10... 9... 8..."

"Stop!"

"7... 6... 5..."

"You wouldn't dare!"

"4... 3..."

"Okay fine! You can have the cat!" Mistlestar finally gave in.

Nightstar began to leave. "Good choice. Wetfoot," he called.

The yellow eyed tom looked at his leader. Echofall jumped at him, but Wetfoot kicked him with his back leg. "Yes sir?"

"Come, we're leaving."

. . .

Nightstar, Tallflight, Wetfoot and Farleap padded through the forest. They were on their way back to ShadowClan's camp when the leader stopped by a tree.

"We'll stop here for the night. Wetfoot, fetch us some prey," he ordered.

The deputy nodded. "As you wish, sir."

Nightstar looked at the RiverClan warrior. "Tallflight, watch her."

Farleap started to look around, and Tallflight said, "if your thinking of trying to escape, it's pointless. I know from experience."

The she-cat rolled her eyes. "At least it's a few minutes away from all of you."

"Why am I included in this? I hate Nightstar just as much as you do."

Farleap snarled. "Don't lie to me! Your his mate. You told him I was in RiverClan!"

"Nightstar murdered his own brothers Smokestar and Rowanleap! He forced me to be his temporary mate. You think I have loyalty for that... that foxheart? Ha, no! Farleap, I would've given anything to keep your location a secret, up until you killed him. It would have been perfect. The long lost daughter of Falconheart and Sharpleaf, you could've killed Nightstar and freed ShadowClan! And it could still happen," Tallflight explained.

"If you want him dead so badly, then why couldn't you have just killed him yourself? Your his mate, you must've had tons of chances-"

"Some cats in ShadowClan would follow me, and some wouldn't. Then we would be fighting ourselves! I thought this through, Farleap. It has to be you! ShadowClan needs you. I need you."

The young warrior hissed. "But I never wanted to be caught up in this! I just wanna go home!"

Tallflight snarled. "ShadowClan is more important than you, or me. If you have a sliver of honor left inside of you, at dawn you will challenge Nightstar to a fight, and you will win!"

At the first light of dawn, Tallflight nudged Farleap awake. "You know what to do," Tallflight hissed.

Farleap got up and saw that Nightstar and Wetfoot were already awake. "Let's continue on," the black tom ordered.

"Uh... Nightstar? I... I challenge you to a fight!"

Nightstar looked at her. "Oh really? I wouldn't expect you to be so hesitant."

"Be quiet and fight me..." Farleap trembled. She really didn't like fighting, so she was trying to stall as much as possible.

She lunged for him, but he was too quick and moved out of the way. Farleap tumbled a few fox lengths away. Nightstar dove for her but she rolled away then pinned him.

"Do it Farleap! He's trying to confuse you but you got him right where you want him! Go for the throat! Think of your father!" Tallflight yowled.

"But... I can't just kill a cat in cold blood, not even Nightstar!"

Nightstar pushed the she-cat off with his back legs and pinned her. "There's a line between mercy and completly bird-brained. This forest is a cruel place and if you don't train yourself to aline with

that, it'll swallow you whole. If there's anything I can teach you, let it be that." He stepped off of her.

"If you want to kill me just do it! I know I can't beat you! I'm the daughter of Falconheart, congratulations you found me!" Farleap yowled.

"Are you now?" his red eyes gleamed.

"What?"

"Or are you the daughter of me?"

The Fall Of A Leader

"My father is Falconheart, not a murderer like you!" Farleap hissed.

"Didn't you ever wonder what happened to your littermates? You had two sisters. Your so-called 'father' slathered your sisters when he learned they were mine," Nightstar explained.

"My father would never kill a kit, not even yours!" Farleap hissed.

"Funny thing about noble cats: they're either painfully bird-brained or hiding a darker side. Falconheart may have put on a convincing facade, but I know the truth."

"I took your mother Sharpleaf into ShadowClan more than 18 moons ago. Then every few moons she would sneak away to be with Falconheart. But when she had her second litter of kits... Falconheart realized what she'd done."

"They're his, aren't they? Sharpleaf how could you do this to me?" Falconheart yowled. He raised his claws and the she-cat's eyes widened.

"Stop it! You'll hurt them! I'm sorry, I'm sorry!"

Nightstar heard the yowling and raced to where it was coming from. When he got there, two she-kits were dead. He looked at Falconheart.

"I'll kill you!" Nightstar pinned the warrior to the ground and snarled.

"Nightstar stop it," Sharpleaf pleaded. "Please leave us alone."

The leader looked at her. "What are you saying? He murdered our kits."

"These kits shouldn't have happened. Please leave us alone."

The black tom looked around, then slowly left the bush on the edge of ThunderClan territory.

Sharpleaf saw that a she-kit was alive...

Nightstar took a breath. "I thought he'd taken everything from me, but he didn't take you, Farleap. I'm not bringing you to ShadowClan as a prisoner. I'm bringing you home as a daughter. The daughter I always wanted: the one with Sharpleaf."

"Okay... I'll come to ShadowClan. Thank you... father," Farleap stuttered.

"No!" Tallflight hissed. She arched her back and bared her teeth at the tom who sat before her.
"Oh pipe down," Nightstar said, rolling his eyes at his mate.

The warrior ignored him. "Farleap, you weren't there! You don't know what he's done to the Clan, what he's done to me. I am your kin, listen to me!"

Farleap shook her head. "It's the truth! He's my father," Farleap defended.

The she-cat groaned. "You're acting as soft as a kittypet! I don't know how I could have ever believed in you!"

The black tom chuckled. "Don't be so upset, darling. You've lost, just like your father Smokestar lost before you. It runs in your kin's blood." He turned to his deputy. "We have to move quickly to reach the camp before-"

"NO!" was the last thing he heard before he felt claws tearing through his throat...

Nightstar gasped as he laid on the ground, blood pooling out of his throat. He could feel his lives slipping away and Tallflight slashed at him with her claws, which didn't help.

Wetfoot and Farleap stood there, too stunned to move.

Tallflight bent down to look at the dark-hearted tom as he slowly

died. "See this? You'll die, and not go to StarClan, Nightstar. I've taken your lives..." she grinned slyly.

"I am Tallflight. Daughter of Smokestar! And it is you who has lost."

Nightstar tried to stay awake for as long as possible. Shortly after, he let go of his last breath and went limp...

. . .

Clawdawn padded over to Patchtail who nodded. "Congratulations Clawdawn. You and your brother earned this."

The she-cat grinned at her deputy's praise. Falconheart padded over to Clawdawn and Ashmoon.

"Now that you two are warriors, I hope you remember how to fight and hunt. Remember, leaf-fall is coming," he told them.

Ashmoon looked at Falconheart. "Yes, we know." The senior warrior nodded then went away. Runningheart padded over.
"Hey Runningheart, how's Cinderleg?"

The brown tom flicked his ear. "She's good. The kits are healthy." Ashmoon nodded, then looked over at the warriors den and saw Sandtooth looking at him. Ashmoon gulped nervously and grinned.

Volestar looked at the sky. "Clawdawn, Ashmoon, time for your vigil." The two warriors twitched their tails then padded toward the entrance.

. . .

Wetfoot yowled and tackled Tallflight. The two fought for a minute before he managed to pin her. "What have you done!? Do you know what it's like for a deputy to lose his leader?"

Tallflight rolled her eyes. "Step off of me, cat. Or you'll end up like your friend."

Wetfoot snarled as he stared down at her, then got off. He went over to Farleap. "I'm sorry about your father. He was a good friend of mine, but we have to get back to camp."

"What about the Clan? With Nightstar dead... your the new leader Wetfoot," Farleap pointed out. The white tom sighed. "Yes, I have to take the role of leader now."

The calico she-cat purred. "You'd be a good leader, Wetfoot." Tallflight snarled as the two cats began to drag Nightstar's body back to camp. She reluctantly followed.

In ShadowClan's camp, Wetfoot and Farleap dragged Nightstar's body into the clearing. The cats looked a little frightened, but most of them purred because their evil leader was dead.

Specklefur padded over and meowed, "what happened to Nightstar?"

Farleap pointed to Tallflight with her tail. The brown she-cat stayed silent.

Snakewing and Scarfoot gasped.
"Yes, I killed Nightstar, okay? It's not that difficult to understand!" Tallflight yowled. Wetfoot unsheathed his claws, threatening to end her right there and then. For some reason, he didn't and instead jumped upon the highrock.

"Let all cats old enough to catch their own pray, join here beneath the highrock to here what I have to say!"

Weaselfoot and Spiderclaw looked at each other, then padded over with Snakewing and Scarfoot. Wetfoot looked down at the ShadowClan cats then spoke.

"Nightstar was one of my friends, and I will miss him. But we must try to move forward. Tomorrow I will travel to the moonstone to receive my nine lives from StarClan. For now, get some rest. Meeting dismissed."

That concludes *Night's Prowling*. To be continued with *New Moon*.